

Taxpayers to Save up to a Half-Million Dollars in Energy Costs

Binghamton, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and Francis J. Murray, Jr., President and CEO of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) today joined Binghamton Mayor Matt Ryan and other local officials to announce a \$320,933 federal economic recovery grant to the City of Binghamton for the purchase and installation of a photovoltaic solar energy system at the Binghamton water treatment facility located at 25 Broome Street.

The grant is administered by NYSERDA and funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which Hinchey voted for last year. Along with a \$56,635 contribution from the city, it will be used to purchase and install a 49.68 KW solar panel system, including 18 arrays of 12 photovoltaic modules. By reducing their reliance on fossil fuels, City of Binghamton taxpayers are expected to save up to \$556,000 over the lifetime of the project and eliminate over 20 tons of carbon dioxide production annually.

"As energy prices continue to rise and threats to our environment posed by carbon dioxide become more apparent than ever, projects like these are laying the groundwork for a dramatic shift towards sustainability," Hinchey said. "The City of Binghamton and Mayor Ryan have been particularly proactive in the effort to 'green' municipal facilities and taxpayers are reaping the benefits through lower energy costs and a better-protected environment. This project also builds on my work with Binghamton University to make upstate New York a hub for solar energy technology and development."

Binghamton University is a partner of The Solar Energy Consortium -- an industry-driven, non-profit organization that provides leadership, organization, resources, and support for the establishment of a major solar energy industry cluster in New York. Hinchey helped establish TSEC in 2007 and has secured more than \$31 million in federal funding for the consortium and its partners, including \$8 million for Binghamton University's Center for Autonomous Solar Power (CASP). The Center aims to spur economic growth in the Southern Tier and position the school and the region's businesses as leaders in providing cutting-edge technology for defense, aerospace, consumer and industrial markets through solar power designs that will contribute to operational and logistical efficiency.

"Thanks to the leadership and vision of Congressman Hinchey, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is providing a tremendous boost to New York's economy," Murray said. "These funds will help local governments reduce their energy costs, create jobs and ensure that New York State reduces its overall energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The clean energy measures this funding supports will also help accelerate New York on its way toward achievement of Governor David A. Paterson's ambitious clean energy goals and a healthier environment."

"This project will allow us to save costs, create jobs, conserve energy and reduce our carbon footprint," said Mayor Ryan. "It's another example of how we're putting Binghamton on the front edge of the emerging green economy, and we thank Congressman Hinchey for partnering with us in this effort."

Hinchey voted to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through which the grant is funded. The recovery measure has already saved or created more than 2 million jobs – rebuilding our infrastructure and economy for global competitiveness. Through the Recovery Act, 95 percent of working Americans continue to see the benefit of one of the largest tax cuts in history in every paycheck. With Hinchey's support, the House passed the comprehensive Jobs for Main Street Act in December 2009 to make targeted investments in areas that will grow our economy over the long term – including highways, public transit, construction, small businesses, job training, and hiring and retaining teachers, police officers, and firefighters.

More recently, Hinchey voted for, and the president signed into law, comprehensive health insurance reform that will create up to four million jobs over the next decade. The president also recently signed the bipartisan HIRE act, also supported by Hinchey, which is projected to create up to 300,000 jobs with investments in small businesses and infrastructure.